

Message Text

SECRET

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----001157 291831Z /42

O P 291816Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0789
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
AMEMBASSY AMMAN

S E C R E T SECTION 01 OF 02 LONDON 19498

EXDIS

E.O. 11652: XGDS-1
TAGS: PGOV, IS, UK
SUBJECT: PREVIEW OF BEGIN VISIT TO LONDON

REF: LONDON 18586

BEGIN SUMMARY: TOMKYS IN FCO ACKNOWLEDGES THAT HE
AND HIS COLLEAGUES CAN NOT YET MAKE SENSE OUT OF SADAT'S
GAMBIT. TOMKYS PUT FORWARD THREE POSSIBILITIES
FOR POLICY PROPOSALS TO BEGIN DURING THE LATTER'S FORTH-
COMING VISIT TO LONDON, AND SOUGHT THE DEPARTMENT'S
COMMENT URGENTLY. BEGIN'S VISIT WILL LAST A FULL FIVE
DAYS, AFFORDING CONSIDERABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSIONS
WITH HIM HERE. END SUMMARY

1. TOMKYS, HEAD OF FCO NEAR EAST DEPT, BRIEFED US
ON PREVIEW OF BEGIN VISIT TO LONDON AS OF AFTERNOON
NOVEMBER 29. DEVELOPMENTS OF LAST TWO WEEKS IN
JERUSALEM AND CAIRO WILL OF COURSE AFFECT POSITION
UK WILL TAKE DURING TALKS. TOMKYS WAS FRANK TO SAY
HE AND HIS FCO COLLEAGUES CAN NOT MAKE SENSE OUT OF
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SADAT'S GAMBITS AND DO NOT KNOW WHAT TO SAY IN THEIR
BRIEFING PAPERS AND ASSESSMENTS. TOMKYS SPECULATED,
SPEAKING PERSONALLY, THAT IF SADAT HAD CONFINED HIM-
SELF TO HIS VISIT TO JERUSALEM, HE WOULD HAVE HAD A
TWO-TO-ONE SPORTING CHANCE TO ACCOMPLISH SOMETHING.
HOWEVER, BY INVITING THE ISRAELIS TO CAIRO HE HAS
LOST THE ABILITY TO CONTROL WHETHER OR NOT THE PLO

OR PALESTINIAN LEADERS COME TO THE NEGOTIATIONS.
REAL DAMAGE HAS ALSO BEEN DONE TO THE CHANCES OF HOLD-
ING SYRIA IN LINE.

2. ACCORDINGLY, TOMKYS SAID, THE CHANCES OF "GETTING
THINGS BACK ON THE RAILS" ARE SLIM. OPINIONS ARE
HARDENING IN THE FCO THAT WHATEVER IS COMING WILL
BE WORSE UNLESS ISRAEL MAKES SOME SUBSTANTIAL CON-
CESSION TO SADAT. WITH THIS IN MIND, TOMKYS HAS
BEEN SUGGESTING TO HIS CHIEFS THREE ALTERNATIVE
PROPOSALS WHICH CALLAGHAN COULD MAKE TO BEGIN DURING
THE VISIT, AS FOLLOWS: A) THAT ISRAEL ACCEPT IN THE
NEGOTIATIONS FOR A SETTLEMENT TO TAKE INTO FULL
ACCOUNT THE "POLITICAL INTERESTS OF THE PALESTINIAN
PEOPLE," WITHOUT MAKING ANY SPECIFIC COMMITMENT ON
SELF-DETERMINATION OR INDEPENDENT PALESTINIAN STATE-
HOOD; B) THAT IN NEGOTIATING A SETTLEMENT, ISRAEL
SPECIFY THAT IT WILL NOT BE ASSERTING HISTORIC RIGHTS,
BUT IS MAINTAINING ITS TERRITORIAL CLAIMS ONLY IN
SEEKING TO ENSURE ITS SECURITY; OR C) THAT IN NEGOTIAT-
ING A SETTLEMENT, ISRAEL PROPOSE SUBSTANTIAL WITH-
DRAWALS ON ALL THREE FRONTS. ANY OF THESE PROPOSITIONS
WOULD REPRESENT A SIGNIFICANT ADVANCE ON THE ISRAELI
POSITION HELD TODAY, AND IF CONVEYED TO SADAT COULD
BE SO PORTRAYED TO THE OTHER ARABS.

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3. TOMKYS ASKED EMBOFF TO CONVEY THESE THREE IDEAS
TO THE DEPARTMENT AND ATTEMPT TO OBTAIN THE LATTER'S
COMMENTS AS SOON AS FEASIBLE. HOWEVER, HE CAUTIONED
THAT THESE PROPOSALS, WHICH HAVE NOT YET BEEN PASSED
ON BY HIS FCO SUPERIORS, SO FAR REPRESENT ONLY HIS
OWN THINKING. THEY SHOULD ACCORDINGLY NOT BE DIS-
CUSSED WITH ANY BRITISH EMBASSY, AND THE DEPARTMENT'S
COMMENTS SHOULD BE RELAYED TO HIM ONLY THROUGH US
EMBASSY LONDON.

4. IN OTHER RESPECTS, THE FCO ASSUMES THAT CALLAGHAN
WILL TAKE THE SAME POLICY POSITIONS OUTLINED IN PARA
6 OF REFTTEL, EXCEPT THAT IN VIEW OF THE CURRENT SYRIAN
POSTURE IT WILL BE DIFFICULT TO SUSTAIN THE LINE
THAT ALL THE ARAB CONFRONTATION STATES WANT PEACE
NOW.

5. TOMKYS OUTLINED THE LATEST VERSION OF THE SCHEDULE
FOR BEGIN'S VISIT TO LONDON AS FOLLOWS: BEGIN ARRIVES
AT LONDON AIRPORT AT 11:00 DECEMBER 2. HE WILL STAY

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 /026 W
-----001160 291834Z /42

O P 291816Z NOV 77
FM AMEMBASSY LONDON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 0790
INFO AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS
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EXDIS

AT THE CHURCHILL HOTEL. AFTER OBSERVING THE SABBATH UNTIL LATE AFTERNOON OF DEC. 3, HE WILL GO TO 10 DOWNING STREET AROUND 6:00 P.M. FOR THE FIRST TALKS WITH CALLAGHAN, WHO WILL THEN HOST A DINNER IN BEGIN'S HONOR FOR SOME 60 PEOPLE, FOLLOWED BY A LARGER RECEPTION. THE GUESTS WILL BE DRAWN LARGELY FROM THE JEWISH COMMUNITY.

6. ON DECEMBER 4 THERE WILL BE A PLENARY SESSION FROM 10:30 TO 12:30, FOLLOWED BY A WORKING LUNCH. BEGIN WILL THEN REST, AND ANOTHER PLENARY SESSION WILL BE HELD FROM 5:00 TO 6:00 P.M. BEGIN WILL THEN HOST HIS RETURN DINNER, AND THE OFFICIAL PART OF HIS VISIT WILL COME TO AN END.

7. ON DECEMBER 5 BEGIN WILL MEET LOCAL JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS AT 9:15, GIVE TV INTERVIEWS AT 10:15, HAVE A PRIVATE LUNCH, AND THEN MEET WITH THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE FOR TEA AT 4:30. HE WILL THEN VISIT THE ST. JOHN'S WOOD SYNAGOGUE FOR A CEREMONY, AND ATTEND A DINNER FOR THE JOINT ISRAEL APPEAL.

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8. ON DECEMBER 6 IN THE MORNING HE WILL MEET WITH THE ANGLO-ISRAELI FRIENDSHIP GROUPS IN PARLIAMENT. AT 11:00 HE WILL GIVE A BACKGROUND TALK TO SOME EDITORS, FOLLOWED BY AN EXCLUSIVE INTERVIEW WITH THE ECONOMIST AT 12:15. AFTER A PRIVATE LUNCH, HE WILL RECEIVE CONSERVATIVE LEADERS WILLIAM WHITELAW AND JOHN DAVIES AT 4:00 P.M. FOLLOWING A PRIVATE DINNER, HE WILL MEET WITH LOCAL ADHERENTS OF THE HERUT PARTY.

9. BEGIN'S LAST DAY, DECEMBER 7, HE WILL START OFF WITH A PRESS CONFERENCE AT 10:15, MEET WITH JEWISH COMMUNITY LEADERS AT 11:30, AND BRIEF ISRAELI MEDIA AT 12:15. AT 12:45 HE WILL PROCEED TO KENSINGTON PALACE WHERE FCO MINISTER OF STATE FRANK JUDD WILL BID HIM AN OFFICIAL FAREWELL. AT 13:45 HE LEAVES FOR THE AIRPORT.

10. COMMENT: A FURTHER INDICATION OF THE FCO'S DIFFICULTY IN PRODUCING CLEAR ASSESSMENT OF THE RECENT DEVELOPMENTS IN JERUSALEM AND CAIRO IS THE FACT THAT THE BRITISH JIC ASSESSMENTS STAFF, WHICH NORMALLY INCLUDES THE LATEST DEVELOPMENTS IN THE ARAB-ISRAELI SITUATION IN ITS SCHEDULED TUESDAY MEETING, DID NOT INCLUDE THE ARAB-ISRAELI ISSUE IN TODAY'S SCHEDULE. WE UNDERSTAND THE JIC WILL COME UP WITH AN ASSESSMENT ON OR BEFORE FRIDAY DEC. 2. MEANWHILE, THE FCO WILL OBVIOUSLY APPRECIATE ANY ANALYSIS OR POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS WE CAN CONTRIBUTE ON THE SUBJECT. THE FACT THAT BEGIN WILL BE IN LONDON FOR OVER FIVE DAYS WILL AFFORD CONSIDERABLE OPPORTUNITY FOR DISCUSSIONS WITH HIM HERE.

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: Z
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Channel Indicators: n/a
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Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Sent Date: 29-Nov-1977 12:00:00 am
Decaption Date: 22 May 2009
Decaption Note: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 22 May 2009
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1977LONDON19498
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: X1
Errors: N/A
Expiration:
Film Number: D770442-0303
Format: TEL
From: LONDON
Handling Restrictions:
Image Path:
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Legacy Key: link1977/newtext/t1977119/aaaaahep.tel
Line Count: 211
Litigation Code IDs:
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Litigation History:
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Message ID: add05a20-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Office: ACTION SS
Original Classification: SECRET
Original Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 4
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: SECRET
Previous Handling Restrictions: EXDIS
Reference: 77 LONDON 18586
Retention: 0
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17-Mar-2005 12:00:00 am
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review Media Identifier:
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
SAS ID: 695700
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: PREVIEW OF BEGIN VISIT TO LONDON
TAGS: PGOV, IS, UK, (BEGIN, MENACHEM)
To: STATE
Type: TE
vdkgvwkey: odbc://SAS/SAS.dbo.SAS_Docs/add05a20-c288-dd11-92da-001cc4696bcc
Review Markings:
Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
22 May 2009
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 22 May 2009